

From the Editors

In this issue, we present two articles that each deal with a rare plant. When we hear a plant is rare, we often think it must be endangered, but this is not necessarily the case. Being rare and being endangered are not equivalent states. Rarity for a species may be quite normal. So, what does being rare, for a plant, really mean? This has been argued over a long period of time. Probably the most widely accepted classification of rarity is that of Rabinowitz, which reflects three spatial characteristics: population size, ecological specialisation and geographic range. Some authorities include the frequency of occupancy in suitable habitats. Temporal rarity also is a consideration. Some species are common following fire but become rare with time, as conditions change and become unsuitable - until after the next fire event.

Unfortunately, for many rare plants, being rare is because they are under some type of threat and face the potential of extinction. Yet, for a lot of these plants, we have no idea of the importance of their role in the environment. Nor do we notice their passing. It is pleasing, therefore, that we can present these two articles and highlight the need to be more aware of what is around us.

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